

Ref. #3

Amuta, Japan
14 Sept, 1945

Dear Helen,

It is now 0700 and I am sitting in a club taken over by us which belonged to the Baron Matsui family. The Jap mine owners used to convene here and it is quite nice. Anything we want we just commandeered, so the first thing was a lot of beer and the Japs were told to keep us supplied.

It is fitting that the rescued officers should reside here. They have set up a military control government over the obsequious and scared Japs which is tougher and fairer than anything to come later.

We arrived yesterday about this time after a lousy all night ride. The Jap countryside, even at night, was interesting. The houses and railroad are in conformity with the Jap stature ---- everything is small. They peered at us curiously as we went through the stations. We are at Amuda or Amuta and

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if you look at the map you'll see that by water we are only 25-30 miles, but by rail we had to go north and then retrace south, and have travelled possibly 80 miles in an all night trip. It is like a trolley car and stops at every station.

I spent a busy time at informative day at the prison camp. I'll describe it to you in detail later.

The doctors who were prisoners had set up their own hospital and, despite lack of equipment and medicine did a grand job with this camp. Dr. Hewlitt was in charge and his story is a real saga of these times. They made their instruments and splints with bicycle spokes stolen from G. I. bicycles for skeletal traction - minus clothes for O.R. uniforms and using steam off a stove for sterilization. He had quite a number of operative procedures and was put in solitary for a week for protesting lousy conditions. He thinks this camp the most brutal in Japan but maybe he does not know of the others.

Atrocities are well authenticated and there were 3 executions and 95% of the prisoners were beaten - some a little - some a lot.

Brutality was not as common or as tough as we are wont to believe - but bad enough. D.O.W's were made to kneel long hours on bamboo poles until circulation was cut off and I have pictures of a boy who has lost both feet in this fashion. Another little trick was to strap our boys in winter, throw water on them and let it freeze. Beatings with a leather strap were common. Other forms were tying of the hands, neck and feet in a stooped position.

I have seen some pitiful cases, these stories will become common knowledge. These survivors are tickled to pieces and just talking to them gives them a big thrill. I've been deluged with questions about sport from men and officers. They are so hungry for news of the States and what has gone on. It is pathetic!! They are strange men moving in a

Strange and unknown world. Many have lost their fight and pizzazz.

However, they are tough on the Japs now and so are the Chinese.

I've been to 3 (three) Chinese prison camps here, discovered the day we arrived. Some of the Chinese did not know the war was over.

The End.

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